

Chapter Title: OBJECTS AND THE ARABESQUE

Book Title: The Mobile Image from Watteau to Boucher

Book Author(s): David Pullins

Published by: Getty Publications, Getty Research Institute. (2024)

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/jj.16738713.6>

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Chapter 2

OBJECTS AND THE ARABESQUE

In the decoupage print market, efforts at organizing motifs in a way that was useful to amateurs coalesced around the arabesque, a flexible and intuitive decorative system well suited to the monochrome grounds that received most cut out prints. Symmetrical arrangements linked through pieces of ornament or strapwork unified otherwise miscellaneous collections of figural motifs. This phenomenon specific to actual decoupage might have held only peripheral importance to art making more broadly were it not for the fact that the widespread fashion for arabesque decoration in France in the 1710s and 1720s intersected directly with the careers of future academicians who would reach maturity in these years.

Jean-Antoine Watteau, Jean-Baptiste Oudry, and François Boucher's well-documented facility with the arabesque as a decorative mode reinforces the relevance of the foundational practices outlined in the previous chapter. It also divorces aspects of their practice from the ideological charge often assumed given their later identities as academicians. This is not to say that far more sophisticated ways of composing were not being advocated and theorized by the Académie and painters' workshops throughout France, but merely to acknowledge that even the highest-level academicians had recourse to useful, elementary modes of production. The contention presented here is that these modes of production had a lasting influence on how these artists solved concrete concerns, notably around the organization of labor in the workshop and the making of paintings for decoration.

Arabesques dominated decoration in France following their adaptation from Italian Renaissance precedents by Charles Le Brun at the château of Vaux-Le-Vicomte in the 1660s through their popularization for Parisian hôtels well into the 1720s (fig. 31).¹ Characterized by figural motifs punctuating symmetrically arranged, architectural, or strapwork structures, arabesques proved an exceptionally flexible form of surface decoration. They were easily expanded

Jean-Baptiste Oudry (French, 1686–1755). *Still Life* (detail), early 1720s. See fig. 50.



Fig. 31. Claude Audran III (French, 1658–1734) and workshop. *Twelve Months in Grotesque*, ca. 1708–9, six oil on canvas panels mounted as a screen, 242 × 62 cm (each). Private collection.

or contracted in response to irregular planes, while their composition through discrete elements made it easy for artists to absorb or discard a given motif and to divide labor between various hands. By 1700, arabesque designs printed after Jean Bérain the elder (1640–1711) impacted not only wall decoration but also tapestries at Beauvais, faience at Moustier, the elaborate marquetry of André-Charles Boulle, and soft-paste porcelain at Chantilly and Saint-Cloud. By the start of the eighteenth century, in painted decoration the arabesque became associated with the workshop of Claude Audran III (1658–1734), who had inherited and expanded the business of his uncle, Claude II (1639–84). By 1692 Claude Audran III had attained the status of *maître* in the artists' guild of Saint-Luc and in 1704 was appointed concierge at the Palais du Luxembourg,



a post he held until his death.² Audran readily secured royal commissions for painted arabesque decoration, including at the menagerie of Versailles and interiors of the châteaux of Tuileries, Fontainebleau, Anet, and Meudon, as well as urban projects associated with the Regency's reorientation to Paris.³ The Swedish architect and diplomat Daniel Cronström, who tried unsuccessfully to lure Audran to Stockholm, reported to the architect Nicodemus Tessin the younger in 1693, "Audran has the greatest reputation in this genre after Bérain," and he "incorporates many things of his own invention, because he has genius."⁴

As a training ground for many future members of the Académie—including Watteau, Nicolas Lancret, Jean-Baptiste Pater, Alexandre-François Desportes, and Oudry—the Audran workshop held a central place in the artistic life of

early eighteenth-century Paris. Through a particular formal synchronicity, the logic of the arabesque as a mode of engaging visual material, moreover, directly reinforced and put to good use the kinds of thinking, seeing, and producing in parts that undergirded artists' academic drawing instruction. A better understanding of the professional and economic motivations behind Audran's success helps to situate painting practices within a broader landscape of visual culture. It proves particularly useful for rethinking early modern workshop production, divisions of labor, and authorship. This echoes the divisions of genre in Bachelier's organization of motifs and their subsequent assignment to students according to their chosen trade. The overall design for a given tapestry, piece of porcelain, furniture, or wall decoration might be ascribed to Le Brun, Bérain, or Audran, but, in fact, these were products made by teams of artists specialized by genre. Coordinators of work rather than solitary masters, figures like Le Brun and Audran could impact the visual field with staggering rapidity and breadth. Their ways of working, however, have allowed art historians to expunge them from the dominant narratives of fine art. What follows constitutes a deeper analysis of the arabesque's popularity and role in a broad sense, followed by case studies devoted to Watteau, Oudry, and Boucher. These leading artists' careers not only capitalized on this collaborative mode of workshop production but in turn reinforced a logic that held a lasting impact on how they conceived of image making.

* * *

The very modishness of Audran's interiors led to their near-complete destruction by the 1730s.⁵ By midcentury, few examples existed and writers—including Anne-Claude-Philippe de Tubières-Grimoard de Pestels de Lévis, the comte de Caylus, and the critic La Font de Saint-Yenne—framed them as things of the past. Given their ephemeral, decorative nature and expenditure of energy on unmeaning subjects, their loss was deemed unregrettable. Within decades of their creation, arabesques began to be excluded from art history as writers chose to emphasize academicians' later production. Outside of Paris, however, persistent Swedish interest led to Carl Johan Cronstedt's acquisition in 1734 of the Audran workshop's complete collection of approximately 1,900 drawings, preserved today in the Nationalmuseum, Stockholm.⁶ Presentation drawings are part of this group, but the vast majority are working materials with pinholes and cutouts, evidence of pouncing, notations, squaring, and corrections in multiple hands. Together, they document a large studio in an ornamental mode, coordinated by a single master; their authorship stands in for a host of specialized designers and executors whose roles can now only be partially reconstructed. Rather than pursue the tempting route of identifying individual hands such as Watteau's or Oudry's within this collection (which has been conducted by others with much contestation),⁷ these drawings are better accepted as working materials produced in a "house style." Authorship is, in this formulation, secondary to use value. Understanding the drawings' generative role at a material level allows us to access how studio practices normally discounted as decorative hold concrete ties with



Fig. 32. Workshop of Claude Audran III. Page from the Cronstedt album, ca. 1700, red chalk, red-chalk counterproof, ink on paper. Stockholm, Nationalmuseum.



Fig. 33. Workshop of Claude Audran III. Chinese figure, ca. 1700, paper with black chalk and pinholes for pouncing. Stockholm, Nationalmuseum.

studios led by academic painters (a phenomenon addressed in chapter 3 of this volume). Both are driven by a need for motifs that may have been developed for one project, but were ultimately redeployed multiple times, perhaps years down the line, ideally in the hands of assistants of even moderate skill. This recycling of a set of motifs, whether wholesale or in parts, proved economically advantageous for maker and patron alike.

Technically, the structure of arabesque designs is consistent across hundreds of sheets from the Audran workshop. One quarter or one half of the design was drawn in graphite, then overlaid with red chalk to produce a counterproof that provided the overall, symmetrical skeleton, the key lines of which were further drawn over in ink (fig. 32). Reserves or blanks left throughout this exacting symmetry allowed for the later insertion of an endless variety of discrete figural, animal, or vegetal units, drawings which were worked up separately and in order to better work out a given motif in detail (fig. 33). These discrete images often have holes for pouncing or evidence of tracing (incised

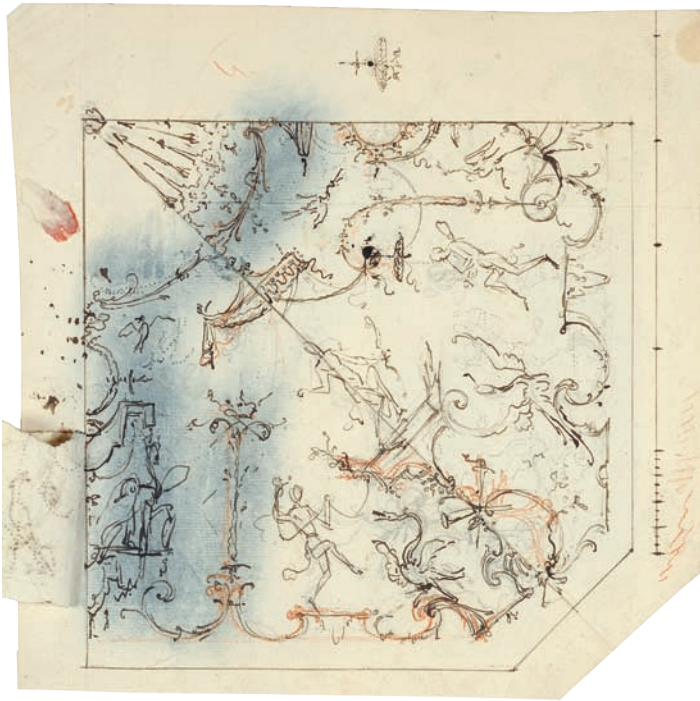


Fig. 34. Workshop of Claude Audran III. Arabesque design, ca. 1700, red-chalk counterproof, black ink on paper with tipped-in components. Stockholm, Nationalmuseum, NMH CC II 141.

Fig. 35. Workshop of Claude Audran III. Presentation drawing for clavecin decoration, ca. 1700, gold paint, gouache, and graphite, 24 × 59 cm. Stockholm, Nationalmuseum, NMH CC II 57.



lines and/or red-chalk backing), indicating that their larger scale may have allowed for a one-to-one transfer between motif and finished work. A material manifestation of this approach to the individuated unit is the regular appearance of layered options tipped-in on a given design providing Audran or his client with alternate motifs (fig. 34) before the creation of meticulously colored and gilded presentation drawings (fig. 35).⁸ These multifaceted objects connect the two principal bodies of work: skeletal structures and individuated motifs.

While Audran seems typically to have laid out the overall structure, he relied on individual painters to insert their contributions according to their genre specialty. In his biography of Watteau, the *amateur* of the arts Caylus described

Audran as follows: “This gallant man therefore had a natural taste. Principally, he had studied ornaments, such as those of Raphael at the Vatican [...] These compositions were susceptible, by the places he reserved for them, of receiving different figural and other subjects, according to the wishes of those individuals who had adopted the taste for having their ceilings and paneling [*lambris*] decorated in this way, so that many artists of diverse genres found employment with him.”⁹ Caylus seems to capture the spirit of this process elegantly in his use of the verb “receive” to indicate the dynamic between a structuring scaffold and the varia it accommodated. In a letter to Tessin from 1694, Cronström described this particularly efficacious distribution of labor in his own terms. His definition of “un peintre d’ornement” explained the difficulty of procuring one decorative artist for the Swedish court when the very mode was collaborative.

It happens that he whom one calls a painter of ornament is, first of all, a man who invents and disposes ornament designs [*des desseins d’ornements*]. There are those who only dispose and design without painting; others who design a little and do not paint. Then there are the parts which enter into ornament, like the Figure, Architecture, Perspective, Allegory, Grotesque, Animals, Birds, Flowers, Masques, etc. And, then that which one properly calls ornament which is the acanthus leaf, rinceaux, etc. [...] In truth, the majority of others are also lodged there and all the works that carry their names are painted by 7 or 8 different men; what is one to do with all this? I promised you one man; however, I did not know where to find one who knows all the parts of ornament, neither in having here 2 or 3 who possesses all. I discovered this only as a result of a deeper understanding of everything, that by dint of seeing, asking, reasoning, and having designs made in my presence, because their word is nothing but misleading.¹⁰

Men like Audran might not even execute the work but assign elements of the whole to specialists in programs that were, by definition, collaborative. The continuous surface resulted from an assemblage of motifs and hands. Echoing the pyramidal structure of the academic hierarchy of genres, in which each successive stage of proficiency encompassed those below, paradoxically among arabesque painters it was the academically lowliest status, the painter of ornament, who coordinated the various genres, suturing them together by means of ornamental filament.

This distribution of labor under Audran’s direction meant that he was an appropriate intermediary for clients as well as a logical consultant on the talent of artists across the full range of genres who had begun their careers in his employ. The Swedish architect Carl Hårleman relied on Audran’s accumulated knowledge in this capacity when he came to Paris in 1732 to gather material and hire artists for the renovation of Stockholm’s royal palace.¹¹ In March, Hårleman reported to Tessin’s son, Carl Gustaf, “Monsieur Audran had me talk to several painters in ornament and animals who, for the same pension as that demanded by the sculptors, are able to complete our affair [...] The workmen [*compagnons*],

of which there are a certain number, are paid by the foot [*le pied d'un écu*], four francs and one hundred sols."¹² Divided by hands, the decorative surface was understood as contractable by the foot, like textiles, leather, or wallpaper. This followed from less direct statements in correspondence between Cronström and Nicodemus Tessin during the 1690s as they determined how best to employ French artists in the Swedish court and negotiate with Audran himself for designs. In 1693, Audran had written that he did not need to visit Stockholm in order to produce a design for a renovated room in the palace, but only required its measurements.¹³ Likewise, Audran used this decorative system of design to fill in the irregular shapes of significant numbers of harpsichord bodies and coach-door panels (see fig. 35).¹⁴ Conceiving of the painted surface in this way permitted an incredible degree of flexibility in the choice of decorative motifs, whether this was a combination of animals, figures, flowers, or ornament. Audran inculcated artists with an ability to respond to surfaces far more complex than the rectilinear frame, to produce a kind of decoration that could satisfactorily and efficiently occupy the maximum number of eventualities.

Audran was understood as the mastermind behind his workshop's arabesque decoration as a whole, but within this system the most talented and ambitious of his assistants inevitably vied for attention, executing figural motifs that stood out. It is easy to imagine that a particular artist on the team could pursue a genre specialty with exceptional success, perhaps even with an eye to exiting the artisanal guild altogether in favor of the Académie. This aspect of professional development within (and eventually beyond) Audran's keep is felt in Hårleman's discussions with Audran about the role of individual artists in his workshop and the practicalities of engaging them, expressed in economic terms.

Audran, the ornamentist, helped me in my research and named people here who, after having worked all their life with him [*chez lui*], can certainly be taken as the best in Paris. It is he, too who — after having made me see that which they amass under his order and in his atelier — convinced me to accord these sums stipulated by the contracts. I took them on three-year terms so that, if we find them too expensive, they can be returned without anything further.¹⁵

Among those Hårleman consulted who demanded outrageous fees were painters who had begun in Audran's workshop. These included Watteau's later student Pater, who refused to leave France for under 10,000 livres. Hårleman claimed to have even seen a letter attesting to the king of Poland's failed attempt to lure Oudry to Warsaw for 8,000 livres.¹⁶ Formerly members of a collaborative team, these now independent masters enjoyed the celebrity of their newfound autonomy and the financial advantages of branding their proper names. How those transformations took place reveals that careers begun in the realm of decoration were not, as frequently figured in early biographies, lamentable. In contrast, they were important means of artistic and financial advancement. This transitional period in these enterprising artists' careers can be understood as reinforcing and further inculcating a cut-and-paste modality, both at the level of individuated

motif and how it was to be distributed across a surface. Locating that logic in the careers of Watteau, Oudry, and Boucher helps to situate this phenomenon among some of the most celebrated names in eighteenth-century French painting, artists whose production has long been plagued by accusations of being decorative.

Watteau

Watteau seems to have entered the workshop of Claude Audran III by an introduction from his previous master, Claude Gillot, around 1709.¹⁷ Watteau's early biographers reported that within Audran's circle his task was to "make the figures in his works."¹⁸ Arabesque decoration was largely written out of Watteau's early biographies or included only to be later denounced. Laurent-Josse Leclerc writes that Gillot presented Watteau to Audran, describing the latter as "an excellent painter of ornament." Audran in turn "occupied him with making the small figures in his works" both before and after Watteau's brief trip in 1709 to his native city of Valenciennes.¹⁹ This suggests Watteau's involvement with Audran overlapped with the period in which he pursued admission to the Académie. Assumptions that artists evolved from the decorative to the academic, shedding the former for the latter, disguise more complex, overlapping narratives about artistic development. While hardly clear-cut divisions in practice, a black-and-white way of thinking is nonetheless detectable in writing on these artists from their earliest biographies, presumably better to extract them from these decorative origins. Jean de Jullienne echoed Leclerc, recording that Watteau "separated himself from [Gillot], in order to enter the Luxembourg [Palace], at the place of Mr. Audran, excellent painter of ornaments, who occupied Watteau with making figures in his works and whose good taste served him well in providing new light [*nouvelles lumières*]."²⁰ Jullienne likewise landed on the movement away from ornament, emphasizing the importance of the prestigious Luxembourg collection to Watteau's development and characterizing Audran as the palace's concierge rather than as an enormously successful ornamentist. Subsequent authors, notably Pierre-Jean Mariette and Antoine Joseph Dezallier, would further solidify this moment as a pivot in Watteau's career.

The *marchand-mercier* Edme-François Gersaint and Caylus wrote revealingly about Watteau's formation following Gillot. Gersaint reports:

Watteau next entered the place of M. Audran of the Luxembourg [Palace], who was very occupied with camaïeux and arabesques* to which much attention was given at that time, and that one placed equally on the ceiling as on the paneling of grand Cabinets. With Audran, he [Watteau] procured a sweeter life, and M. Audran—who found, for his account, the facility and prompt execution of the brush of our young Painter—rendered him an easier life in proportion to the benefits that his works occasioned. It was with Audran [*chez lui*] that he adopted the taste for ornament of which we have several engravings in this genre.²¹

Already in 1744, Gersaint understood the arabesque as part of a fashionable past, already lost in situ and better consulted through prints. In contrast to the hardships of the mercantile artistic servitude associated with the Pont Notre-Dame, he emphasized Audran's ability to satisfy Watteau, if only financially. In fact, the economics of the system in which Watteau and Audran engaged would be realized spectacularly, albeit posthumously, with the publication of Watteau's motifs by Jullienne. But this was insufficient to hold back the inevitability of Watteau's self-realization as an independent master.

Watteau, however, did not wish to remain there, nor to spend his life working for others, and felt himself in possession of imagination. In his spare time, he ventured to create an ingenious painting [*tableau de génie*] representing a departure of troops: he showed it to M. Audran in order to ask his opinion of it [...] M. Audran, a clever man able to judge a beautiful thing, was alarmed by the merit that he recognized in this painting; fearful of losing someone who was useful to him and on whom he often relied for the arrangement and even for the compositions of pieces that he had to execute, subtly advised Watteau not to spend his time on these kinds of liberal, fantasy subjects, which could only make him lose the taste he had practiced.²²

While much ink has been spilled identifying the “ingenious painting,” the passage's most important aspect is its description of a member from Audran's team realizing his capacity to become an autonomous artist and Audran's failure to retain him.²³ Given Watteau's initial academic success, his tenure with Audran was perhaps necessarily limited — though Watteau likely continued painting arabesques for some time and gradually transitioned out of Audran's workshop rather than abruptly terminating his role on a given date or even year.²⁴ In terms



Fig. 36. Jean-Antoine Watteau (French, 1684–1721). Ceiling, ca. 1707–8, oil on canvas mounted, center medallion: 74 cm (diam.); each outer panel: 48 × 60 cm. Chicago, private collection.

of professional success constituted by a steady stream of remunerative work, Audran's shop left little to be desired. But presumably competing egos within a large team and the increasing pressures of an ideological elevation of craft over the course of the century motivated artists like Watteau to chart a separate path. This is to say that while the early biographies of an artist like Watteau worked to write him out of these guild and decorative contexts, presumably he, too, felt the pressure or ambition to aspire to the elevated status offered by the Académie.

Caylus's prescriptive eulogy of the artist, read to the Académie in 1748, offers the second key commentary on Watteau in Audran's employ. Caylus lamented talents wasted on ephemeral, antiheroic arabesques.

It was there that Watteau formed his taste for ornament and that he acquired a lightness of brushstroke required by the white or gold grounds on which Audran had his works executed [...] But, I admit that it is with regret that I make this sort of eulogy, because this genre has not only destroyed the apartment ceilings of the most skillful painters, but this changing fashion, to which the plaster ornamentists have succumbed, still deprive you every day of an occupation that would permit you to employ your talent in the great and heroic.²⁵

Caylus suggests that Watteau's skills were wasted on the kinds of ornamental projects led by Audran, while also indicating that the methods of working in this context lingered well beyond his earliest period. In the context of an address to the Académie, Caylus could only speak in terms that regretted this foray into ignoble, antiheroic terrain. The very ephemerality of these types of projects pointed to their lack of content or cultural weight. When Caylus followed these comments with an apologetic "I return to Watteau," he effectively suggested that this was an unfortunate excursus around Audran, rather than a real link between the ornamental and academic sides of the same artist.²⁶

Beyond drawings in Stockholm and plates in the *Recueil Jullienne* that are only partially reliable given printmakers' liberties in translating Watteau's work, there are very few extant examples of the artist's arabesques. But they evoke a way of seeing by the artist and his patrons that transparently related to the broader phenomenon of a cut-and-paste modality within arabesque decoration. As Martin Eidelberg notes, Watteau's drawings indicate that in his mature arabesque production, the artist likely designed and executed both the figural motifs and the surrounds—but always operating with these as two distinct categories. Moreover, each of these categories comprised material that could be recycled.²⁷ In his rectilinear easel paintings, this same mode of production would have a more seamlessly integrated but no less direct role in the deployment of figures and ground.

Watteau's arabesque works include a ceiling of five irregularly shaped panels in an almost strictly vegetal and decorative register (fig. 36),²⁸ a ceiling in oil on plaster on the rue Condé (ca. 1713),²⁹ and arabesque designs on false-lacquer (vernix) coach doors—discovered through X-radiographs—that Watteau later reused as the supports for *fêtes galantes*.³⁰ The richest and most complete



Fig. 37. Jean-Antoine Watteau (French, 1684–1721). *L'Enjôleur* (*The Charmer*), ca. 1709, oil on panel, 79.5 × 39 cm. Valenciennes, Musée des Beaux-Arts, 99.4.1.



Fig. 38. Jean-Antoine Watteau (French, 1684–1721). *Le Faune* (*The Faune*), ca. 1709, oil on panel, 79.5 × 39 cm. Valenciennes, Musée des Beaux-Arts, 99.4.2.

of Watteau's extant arabesques are four wall decorations on panel (figs. 37, 38) and an oil-on-plaster ceiling that survives in situ in what is today the Hôtel de Poulprie, purchased in 1705 by Louis Béchamel, marquis de Nointel, whom Watteau likely encountered through Audran's aristocratic patron base.³¹ Indications of shallow depth distinguish panels intended to be seen from below or from above; unlike Watteau's later arabesques, however, integrative illusion is deliberately broken against a monochrome ground that insistently atomizes motifs in the tradition of Bérain and Audran.³² "These are light, ornamental compositions agreeably distributed," as Germain Brice observed in his guide to Paris in 1752.³³ The Nointel panels are organized much like Audran's contemporaneous *Twelve Months in Grotesque* (see fig. 31), which was probably a multiauthored work divided by genre for which both Watteau and Desportes have been proposed as contributors—though their authorship has been erased through assimilation of a house style and lump payment to Audran of 495 livres from the *Comptes des Bâtimens du roi* (Accounts of the king's building works).³⁴ Like the painted surface, Audran would presumably have then broken down that sum between various hands.

Watteau employed a method of preparatory drawings following his teacher, Gillot; on a given sheet, he held together multiple motifs awaiting deployment, either individually or in combination. Drawings related to the Nointel panels demonstrate that while motifs were held in this *recueil*-like space, categories of decoration or arabesque were not distinguished from fine art or easel painting. A sheet of individuated figure studies (fig. 39) contains a motif of an actor holding a staff that appears in the Nointel *Le Vendangeur* (*The Grape Picker*), as well as a Bacchus, clothed and minus attributes, that appears in the Nointel *Le Faune* (*The Faun*).³⁵ Watteau's decorative motifs bled freely, however, into his early fine art production. He used the actor carrying a quiver at the top center of the same sheet in an easel painting, *L'Amour au théâtre français* (ca. 1714; *Love in the French Theater*; Gemäldegalerie, Berlin), probably after reworking it in another drawing (ca. 1713–14; private collection).³⁶ The two reclining figures appear in the easel painting *L'Assemblée près de la fontaine de Neptune* (ca. 1712; *Assembly near the Fountain of Neptune*; Prado, Madrid). More generally, Watteau employed the sheet's elongated figures with their tiny heads and staffs in his most pointed effort at grand subjects during this period, *L'Isle de Cythère* (ca. 1710; *The Isle of Cythera*; Städel Museum, Frankfurt). But the distinction between fine and decorative was additionally equivocal and bidirectional: the standing figure of *L'Amour au théâtre français* appeared in another arabesque, one that Gabriel Huquier had a heavy hand in reformulating and publishing as *L'Automne* (*Autumn*).³⁷ As a sheet of studies (ca. 1711; Hessisches Landesmuseum, Darmstadt) indicates, moreover, even ornamental motifs for the arabesque surround could land on a sheet containing figures that appear in Watteau's easel paintings.³⁸

Pendant easel paintings by Watteau, *La Marmotte* (ca. 1716; *The Marmotte*; State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg) and *La Fileuse* (ca. 1716; *The Spinner*; unlocated), were etched by Audran's nephew Benoît Audran II around 1732, with the caption "au Cabinet de Mr Audran du Palais du Luxembourg [*sic*]" and



Fig. 39. Jean-Antoine Watteau (French, 1684–1721). Sheet of six figure studies, ca. 1709–10, red chalk on paper, 16.5 × 20.5 cm. New York, The Morgan Library and Museum, inv. I, 275.

appear in Audran's posthumous inventory in 1734.³⁹ The celebrity of Audran's prematurely deceased apprentice befit the circulation of his composition in print, accompanied by the announcement in large font "after the original painting by Watteau" as well as its careful description and valuation among Audran's personal effects. These put it on par with another painting in Audran's inventory by a then far more celebrated artist, Jacques Stella. Watteau's pendants were single-figure-format works in which a central motif was isolated on a flat ground that provides only a rudimentary setting. A drawing for *La Marmotte* survives (Petit Palais, Paris) with an alternate, even less finished landscape; as a motif, it fits within a series of street characters produced around 1715.⁴⁰ The format was the individuated theater subject known from fashion prints, costume designs by Gillot, or, indeed, the cutout sheets employed in Audran's workshop as motifs awaiting arabesque frames. Watteau adopted this individuation regularly as a kind of anticompositional tactic even in finished paintings, notably his celebrated *L'Indifférent* (*The Indifferent One*) (fig. 40).

In Watteau's system, compositions can be built up or broken down with ease, and at the level of both motifs and methods they facilitated overlap between fine and decorative arts. Disassembly of these often ephemeral decorations could reenact their logic quite literally. Wall decoration was essentially a kind of furnishing that was often dismantled, but of which certain components might



Fig. 40. Jean-Antoine Watteau (French, 1684–1721). *L'Indifférent* (*The Indifferent One*), ca. 1716, oil on panel, 190 × 25.5 cm. Paris, Musée du Louvre, inv. MI 1122. Photo: Stéphane Maréchalle.

be retooled to create objects that aspired to independent works of art. Traces of arabesque frames in Watteau's *L'Escarpolette* (*The Swing*) (fig. 41) and *Le Dénicheur de moineaux* (ca. 1712; *The Robber of the Sparrow's Nest*; Scottish National Gallery) were painted over in order to transform them into more conventional easel paintings.⁴¹ Their ornamental origins were thereby obscured but not ultimately shed in the persistence of free-floating motifs that were only loosely tethered to the surface. In the same manner, shaped canvases addressed in chapter 4 of this volume were typically modified once extracted from their original contexts, the better to be marketed as fine art.

Watteau's slightly later arabesques, dating from around 1715 and known today largely through print, might be understood as a middle step between Audran's influence and Watteau's mature easel paintings. *Le Galant jardinier* (*The Gallant Gardener*) (fig. 42) embodies this transitional stage; in keeping with Audran's division between skeletal structures versus individuated motifs, its central figure of the gardener was probably worked out in yet another, independent drawing.⁴² Thomas Crow has noted the connection between the "curiously additive and disconnected quality" of Watteau's early work and Gillot's manner, particularly in *L'Escarpolette*. Even as Watteau moved toward "increasingly pictorial compositions," in which "the central motif tends to expand and draw the surrounding elements into a tighter and more responsive frame," the result



Fig. 41. Jean-Antoine Watteau (French, 1684–1721). *L'Escarpolette* (*The Swing*), ca. 1712, oil on panel, 95 x 73 cm. Helsinki, Finnish National Gallery, Hjalmar Linder Donation, inv. A II 1413. Photo: Hannu Aaltonen.



Fig. 42. Jean-Antoine Watteau (French, 1684–1721). *Le Galant jardinier* (*The Gallant Gardener*), ca. 1711–12, red chalk on paper, 22.9 x 18.1 cm. Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art, 1992.78.1.

was a curious kind of spatial effect that amounted to a “suspension between pictorial unity and free decorative fantasy.”⁴³ As Isabelle Tillerot argues, the arabesque and its frequent intersection with non-Western forms of decoration and materiality offer an ideal foil to the stability of an academic notion of fine art production based in easel painting and the autonomy of painting.⁴⁴ The physical transformations of *L'Escarpolette* and *Le Dénicheur de moineaux* from arabesque decoration to independent easel paintings by the art market speaks directly to the desire to extract motifs under the pressure to achieve the rectilinear frames and perspectival systems that read as art. This process promised not only to reformulate the objects themselves but also to establish their makers as practitioners of painting, not decoration.

Oudry

Oudry's name appears on Audran's list of artists recommended to the Swedish court who, “after having worked all their life with him [*chez lui*], can certainly be taken as the best in Paris.”⁴⁵ Oudry's proficiency in the arabesque is amply documented, particularly in connection to the artist's pivotal patron, Louis Fagon, who commissioned a suite of rooms for the château de Fontenay-aux-Roses, in the

early 1720s.⁴⁶ Examination of Oudry's documented work and early biographies indicates that, above all, arabesques were a crucial means by which he entered a rarified patronage sphere that would launch his career. They linked crucial nodes in Oudry's expanding circles following his reception to the Académie in 1719, traced between Jean-Baptiste Massé, Fagon, and Henri Camille, marquis de Bérighen, en route to Louis XV and the royal manufactories. This follows from what is known of Audran's patrons: despite its lowly art historical status, the arabesque held a high degree of specifically aristocratic, court-bound appeal that upended genre hierarchies according to social, rather than aesthetic, rank. Paradoxically, therefore, while they were not looked on favorably by the Académie, arabesque paintings nonetheless came with considerable benefits in terms of patronage.

In an address to the Académie in 1761, Oudry's earliest biographer, the abbé Louis Gougenot, outlined the contradiction between having been accepted to the Académie's ranks, but still in search of patrons: "However glorious these new marks of distinction were for M. Oudry, he did not enjoy greater ease. Knowledge of his merit, concentrated within the Académie, had not yet made headway with the greats. M. Massé, his old friend, paved his first routes."⁴⁷ Born to a jewelry merchant, Massé was received by the Académie in 1717;⁴⁸ in his youth, Massé engraved paintings then under Audran's stewardship in the Luxembourg Palace.⁴⁹ Massé's genre of portrait miniatures, though not laudable in the Académie's terms, brought him close to the highest-ranked nobility.⁵⁰ Massé's astute courtly coordination brought Oudry to Bérighen's attention.

Enjoying the highest reputation for miniature painting, M. Massé received at his house the most distinguished people from the court and the city; he was particularly honored by the benevolence of M. le marquis de Bérighen, premier equerry of the king [*écuyer du roi*], who came to see him frequently. His industrious friendship suggested to him to shift conversation, from time to time, to the talents of M. Oudry, to his candor, his righteousness, and to his other personal qualities. Through these carefully orchestrated insinuations, he imperceptibly shepherded M. le marquis de Bérighen to accept to be brought to his friend. M. Oudry's frankness pleased him as much as did his works, and he conceived in this very moment a desire to be useful to him. It was he who sometime later introduced Oudry to the king and who drew back the curtain behind which he had, in a certain sense, been hitherto hidden.⁵¹

The *cabinet* of Massé's home in the Place Dauphine, decorated with arabesques by Audran sometime prior to 1725, evokes the context for such deft manipulation and would have marked Massé's taste for his social superiors.⁵² Gougenot, moreover, tied this space directly to Oudry, who he records completed part of the ceiling in 1725 with arabesque decoration on white ground that continued Audran's initial commission: "M. Oudry submitted himself, in the part of the ceiling that he executed, to the same composition as that which had been adopted by M. Audran."⁵³ Gougenot went on to describe individuated objects—a basket,

four Chinese birds, eight comically attired monkeys—all unified “by arabesque ornaments that are also by M. Oudry” that disguised an inconvenient beam.⁵⁴ Like Audran’s covers for harpsicord or carriage doors, flexibility of the given field was fundamental to the arabesque’s utility and success. Massé’s otherwise rich after-death inventory lacks a single easel painting by Oudry; rather, Massé’s intersection with the young artist came through Oudry’s extension of Audran’s existing arabesque decoration, evidently to Bérighen’s approval.⁵⁵

Appointed first equerry of the king’s horse stables (*premier écuyer de la Petite Écurie du roi*) on 7 February 1724, Bérighen quickly brought Oudry into the royal fold.⁵⁶ In August 1724, the *Mercure* described the king’s new hunting carriage (*calèche*) built to Bérighen’s instructions, heavily sculpted and large enough to seat ten people around a table with painted panels depicting animals.⁵⁷ A similar commission was reported in September for an enormous *calèche* with elaborate sculpture that incorporated a stag’s rack by François Haize.⁵⁸ Oudry’s contributions were praised extensively as having surpassed their role as ornament—yet his paintings were found, all the while, to be well integrated into an overall spectacle of visual pleasures.

One enters it by four doors, two on each side, forming parts of the five panels, all of which decorate the sides of the *calèche*, and which are painted by Oudry [...] The 12 panels just spoken of, which could pass for 12 paintings finished with care, were received with great applause by the Court, where it is agreed that Oudry has a superior talent [...] The king viewed this ingenious and brilliant *calèche* with pleasure and His Majesty was very much amused by traversing [*en parcourir*] the ornaments.⁵⁹

Moving easily between representational panels and ornament, the overall structure rewarded visual traversal. While Oudry’s name was underscored, his ideal viewer, Louis XV, incorporated his talents into a decorative landscape. Formal rhythm motivated the eye as diverse objects and moments of attention were brought under one organizing scheme. The flittering eye bouncing happily from one scene to another suggests an aesthetic associated with interior decoration in this period, *papillotage*, literally “to blink,” or to take the world in as a series of freeze-frames rather than a single, sustained object of attention.⁶⁰ As in Audran’s workshop structure, Oudry’s contribution effected visual punctuation and brought his still-developing genre specialization to the court’s eye. Its integration into a larger whole recalled Oudry’s first royal commission: birds painted into an architectural scene for a production of *The Elements* by Michel Richard Lalande and the abbé André Cardinal, known as Destouches, performed at the Tuileries on 31 December 1721.⁶¹

An uncertain future was built into such commissions, and they were therefore something to be avoided by ambitious painters according to La Font de Saint-Yenne in his nostalgic commentary, *L’ombre du grand Colbert* (1752; The ghost of the Great Colbert). Juxtaposing, in effect, Le Brunian and Audranian decoration, he writes, “If our fathers could have foreseen that one day the

curious [*les curieux*] would come to admire the beauties of a learned brush in the vile corners of warehouses and carriage houses! However, nothing is truer than the fact that before camaïeux gained the upper hand in the decoration of carriages, we have seen colored paintings of a superior price and superior perfection to—or at least equal to—those that adorn apartments.”⁶² In the time that arabesques were being painted, however, these were highly remunerative projects, both financially and in terms of social cachet. While they might have been circumspect in the Académie’s vision of the arts, their appeals to a young artist were obvious, and, in the long term, they in fact moved Oudry’s career ahead in far more lasting ways than their ephemeral character might suggest. Not only did they secure the kinds of easel painting commissions that would place him as a powerful academician and a regular exhibitor at the Salon, but they also informed his working procedure as he went on to establish a prolific studio.

Oudry’s entry into the king’s immediate orbit was supplemented by an introduction to Fagon, son of Louis XIV’s principal doctor, honorary councilor (*conseiller honoraire*), and controller of finance (*intendant des finances*), around 1723.⁶³ Fagon commissioned Oudry’s most important arabesque programs during the same period in which he appointed Oudry painter to Beauvais in 1726 and proposed him as the manufactory’s director in 1732.⁶⁴ According to Gougenot,

Independent of the obligations that M. Oudry had to the marquis de Bérighen, he also had a great many to M. Fagon, of whom M. Hulst had facilitated his acquaintance. This [*intendant des finances*] commissioned him for a considerable suite of works for his property at Vauré [Voré] and for his suburban retreat [*maison de plaisance*] at Fontenay-aux-Roses. M. Oudry decorated these two locations with arabesque paintings mixing flowers and animals on white grounds. M. Fagon found so much pleasure in the company of this painter that he immediately became both his protector and friend.⁶⁵

Gougenot noted Hendrick van Hulst as a conduit between the newly arrived Oudry and a patron who reportedly had an annual income of 60,000 livres but was a “man as hard of heart and as dull of mind as he was crafty.”⁶⁶ Hulst was trained as a portraitist but, like Massé, manipulated this practical knowledge for particular social and professional advancement that probably exceeded artistic skill. Appointed *amateur* and then *historiographe* to the Académie in 1751, Hulst was among a group of advisers, including Bachelier, for improving the quality and financial stability of the porcelain manufactory at Vincennes.⁶⁷ Hulst’s extensive correspondence related to this post suggests his sensitivity to ornament and the translation of motifs by painters into usable, pleasing models for enameling on porcelain—practical knowledge sympathetic to the solutions offered by arabesque ornaments and decorative programs covering irregular bodies, from ceilings split by existing beams to carriage doors.⁶⁸ Hulst’s colleague Vincennes-Sèvres’s chemist Jean Hellot suggested that Oudry’s ability to mass motifs—“strong masses in the foreground [*du devant*] of each small

painting”—made them particularly suitable to translation by porcelain painters, or perhaps by makers of objects more broadly.⁶⁹

According to Gougenot's description, Oudry's arabesques for Fagon were composed of white-ground paneling (*lambris*) into which Oudry introduced (*introduit*) landscape, birds, and animals in the taste of Audran's work at the Versailles *menagerie*.⁷⁰ Mariette's *Abecedario* used similar words, perhaps relying on Gougenot's text or a closely related manuscript today in the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, concluding that they achieved "a completely brilliant & agreeable effect."⁷¹ These texts rely on readers' knowledge of Audran's work and firmly place Oudry in this genealogy.⁷² As the young Watteau's motifs were "received" into Audran's arabesque structure, Oudry's motifs are "introduced" into broader frames while remaining indelibly his own. As with Massé's ceiling additions, Mariette underscored the arabesque's expandable and additive character, noting, "Oudry worked there at different times & while M. Fagon made additions and new embellishments to his country house which, incidentally, was not particularly magnificent."⁷³

A large group of works by Oudry commissioned by Fagon remained at his château de Voré until 2000.⁷⁴ Dating from the 1720s through early 1730s and crossing the spectrum of Audranian arabesque through fully realized pictorial illusionism, they present a range of evidence for the arabesque's place in Oudry's development. The most coherent group consists of nine canvases dated between 1720 and 1723 with a pink ground, ornamental frames, and human figures taken from the kinds of *commedia dell'arte* and *fête galante* subjects that were popular in Watteau's wake and which Oudry pursued early in his career (fig. 43; see fig. 46). As with Watteau's use of figures across the fine-to-decorative divide, during this period Oudry likewise employed motifs freely between arabesques and autonomous easel paintings. In the large panels for Voré, arabesque architecture along the uppermost registers that link birds, trophies, and *camaïeux* roundels through formal rather than narrative modes of composition encapsulates the mental leaps required to see in one frame the unexpected combinations found in the scenes below. More attuned in terms of perspective, these lower registers feature Arlequin and Scaramouche provoking a swan before a woman fishing in an ornamental fountain and a woman seated elegantly on the ground, shading her face from the sun as she watches a hound pursue a stag.

The isolation of given motifs, both in and out of the panels' arabesque surrounds, is rooted in an understanding of figures as motifs that can be cut and then pasted elsewhere, images as objects that operate independently of their contexts. Like Audran's efficacious use of a given motif in two orientations through the simple means of counterproofing or inverting a model before pouncing, Oudry's images regularly flip back and forth depending upon his needs. Through processes of scaling up or down, they could suit as one piece in the puzzle of an arabesque or as a prominent figure in the foreground of a more conventional oil on canvas. The alarmed swan seen in his arabesque for Voré is found in Oudry's contemporary canvas, part of a series of large paintings for a salon at the nearby



Fig. 43. Jean-Baptiste Oudry (French, 1686–1755). *Fishing*, 1720–23, oil on canvas, 1447 × 364 cm. Paris, Musée du Louvre, inv. RF 2002.21. Photo: Michel Urtado.



Fig. 44. Jean-Baptiste Oudry (French, 1686–1755). Salon decoration, 1720s. Condé-en-Brie, Château de Condé-en-Brie.



Fig. 45. Jean-Baptiste Oudry (French, 1686–1755). *Bulldog Attacking a Swan*, 1731, oil on canvas, 192 × 256 cm. Geneva, Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, inv. 1953-0015.

château de Condé-en-Brie (1720s) (fig. 44).⁷⁵ Oudry reprised the motif in reverse for his gigantic *Bulldog Attacking a Swan* (1731; Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, Geneva; fig. 45). A highly finished drawing (1730s; The British Museum) follows both the figures and background of the Geneva composition. The figures were then repeated exactly in oil on canvas almost fifteen years later (1745; North Carolina



Fig. 46. Jean-Baptiste Oudry (French, 1686–1755). *The Hunt*, 1720–23, oil on canvas, 1445 × 364 cm. Paris, Musée du Louvre, inv. RF 2002.20.



Fig. 47. Jean-Baptiste Oudry (French, 1686–1755). *Italian Comedians in a Garden*, ca. 1719, oil on canvas, 65.5 × 83 cm. Private collection.

Museum of Art, Raleigh).⁷⁶ While the reuse of these figures minus the background by 1745 is possible, a more likely scenario would be the role of an unknown drawing and its counterproof for the swan or swan and bulldog alone, both isolated from the ground. As Colin B. Bailey has noted of *Bulldog Attacking a Swan*, the painting completed in 1731 was one of Oudry's most highly promoted canvases. It was listed for sale in his stock lists of 1732 and 1735 and was also exhibited at the Salons of 1737, 1743, and 1751 (and remained in his possession when he died), suggesting not shame in his practice but pride in a motif.⁷⁷

Oudry's Voré panel *The Hunt* (fig. 46) contains a seated woman with a fan, a figure nearly identical to the one the artist had positioned at the center of *Comédiens italiens dans un Jardin* (*Italian Comedians in a Garden*) (fig. 47) a few years earlier. This painting, based on Watteau's *Pour garder l'honneur d'une belle* (ca. 1708–10; *In Order to Guard a Young Lady's Honor*), is known in at least three variants by Oudry.⁷⁸ The figure of a leaping, attacking hound in Oudry's Voré panel is also found in the roughly contemporaneous, monumental painting *The Stag Hunt* (fig. 48). The same hound reappears in reverse in *The Roe Hunt* (fig. 49), attacking a different animal.⁷⁹ Useful in both orientations, this leaping dog moved easily between Oudry's ostensibly fine and decorative production. *The Roe Hunt*, most likely a gift from Louis XV to the duc de Bourbon at Chantilly, was no minor commission. Moreover, in 1725 Oudry showed this painting at the Exposition de la Jeunesse and published an etching of it.⁸⁰ Oudry's process of



Fig. 48. Jean-Baptiste Oudry (French, 1686–1755). *The Stag Hunt*, 1723, oil on canvas, 303 × 435 cm. Stockholm, Nationalmuseum, NM 867.



Fig. 49. Jean-Baptiste Oudry (French, 1686–1755). *The Roe Hunt*, 1725, oil on canvas, 171 × 156 cm. Rouen, Musée des Beaux-Arts, inv. D 820.1. Photo: Gerard Blot.



Fig. 50. Jean-Baptiste Oudry (French, 1686–1755). *Still Life*, early 1720s, oil on canvas, 104.6 × 88.2 cm. Private collection.

thinking through the reversal of the figure first for transfer between works and then as necessitated by his etching may have provided another step in his conception of the figure, and further underscored its independence as a figural unit. A rare series of etchings by Caylus of the Voré panels omitted the pink “fill” that presumably once linked the arabesque armature to the two-dimensional boiserie frames.⁸¹ These etchings thereby move Oudry’s decorative work toward pictorial space and divest them of the trappings that bound them to the room for which they were painted. The effect is a further disassembly of the image, a kind of tracery on the white grounds Oudry had used under Audran.

Oudry’s comfort with leaving motifs atomized, even free-floating, was taken to its greatest extreme in an overdoor for Voré (fig. 50).⁸² Its still-life subject permitted greater freedom to expose this process of thinking in parts, a rebus of juxtapositions with a poetic ring: a chocolate pot, Chinese porcelain cups and saucers, gaming equipment, and fruit are laid out against a light blue ground. In contrast to the pink fill of the more complex vertical panels (see figs. 43, 46), here a yellow surround provides a strange scrim or frame that does little to hold the motifs together. As in so many of the Fagon commissions, including the simpler series of *The Hunt*, *Reverie*, *Poetry*, and *Philosophy*, Oudry provocatively foregrounds juxtapositions of individuated motifs formally reliant



Fig. 51. Jean-Baptiste Oudry (French, 1686–1755) and studio (?). *Feast of the Monkeys*, 1720s, oil on canvas, 179 × 117.2 cm. Private collection.

on the arabesque. He presents them free-floating, with no pretense of placing them in pictorial space. Such transparently assembled works prove useful in dissecting paintings Oudry executed for Voré with a greater degree of pictorial illusionism. In *Feast of the Monkeys* (fig. 51), despite a still life and an allegorical bust in the foreground and distant landscape, the structural logic of the arabesque is revealed in the architecture and surrounding floral garland that remain insistently two-dimensional and decorative. A given group of figures might coalesce as a unit of visual information containing its own perspectival and spatial logic, but only leaps of faith bring these motifs together into a unified whole. The lesson of Oudry's arabesques becomes relevant to understanding his broader pictorial practice. Ultimately, even in Oudry's most conventional forms of pictorial illusionism—the large paintings at Condé-en-Brie (see fig. 44) or *The Stag Hunt* (see fig. 48)—an awareness of his method of conceiving of, distributing, and repeating images as discrete objects, rather than seamless pieces of a composition, dissolves the coherent surface into constituent, recyclable pieces.

Boucher

Born in 1703, Boucher was nearly twenty years Watteau's and Oudry's junior, so his intersection with the arabesque, then on the decline in popularity, necessarily differs. He did not train with Audran and overall had a more rapid and conventional rise within the Académie than the other two artists. This said, from the 1720s through the 1740s Boucher's work clearly evinces a familiarity with the arabesque and its syntax in the tradition of Watteau and Oudry. Although Boucher won the Prix de Rome in 1723 and was therefore well on his way to an academic career, he was unable to travel to Italy and continued a relationship with the Parisian print market. During this period, he contributed over 110 plates to the *Recueil Jullienne*, the massive publishing effort conducted between 1726 and 1735 by Jean de Jullienne to record and circulate all of the drawings and paintings executed by Watteau, who had died prematurely in 1721. Watteau's influence on Boucher in terms of his subjects and even his touch or tact have been well accepted in a context that connects two leading artists of the eighteenth century. Boucher's methods of reproducing Watteau's arabesques, however, suggest that another kind of learning was also afoot, one that deeply familiarized Boucher with this earlier mode of decorative painting characterized by a signature logic of assemblage and deconstruction in parts.



Fig. 52. Michel Aubert (1700–1757), after Jean-Antoine Watteau (French, 1684–1721). *Idole de la déesse Ki Mão São* (*Idol of the Goddess Ki Mão São*), 1731, etching and engraving, 32.2 x 40.5 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RPP-0B-4213.



Fig. 53. François Boucher (French, 1703–70), after Jean-Antoine Watteau (French, 1684–1721). *Kouane Tsai ou Jardinier chinois* (*Kouane Tsai or Chinese Gardener*), 1731, etching and engraving, 21.7 x 15.6 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RPP-0B-4216.

In 1731, a suite of twelve prints by Boucher that reproduced figures described as “tirées” (taken, or literally “pulled”) from a chinoiserie *cabinet* executed by Watteau, probably between 1708 and 1712, for Joseph-Jean-Baptiste Fleuriau d’Armenonville at the château de la Muette was announced. Though the decoration was destroyed when remodeling began in 1737, all evidence suggests it consisted of a series of chinoiserie figures framed by arabesque armatures that organized them across the paneling (fig. 52). Dezallier described Chinese figures by Watteau “painted in the paneling” (“peint dans les lambris”).⁸³ Some evidence indicates, moreover, that the figures floated on small pieces of turf and vegetation atop black false lacquer grounds.⁸⁴ Vestiges of these arabesques cling to other prints of the room by Michel Aubert, and surviving panels recall the transformations of Watteau’s *L’Escarpolette* and *Le Dénicheur de moineaux* from larger arabesques to easel paintings. Boucher, however, extracted figures in a manner that excised the arabesque surround, breaking down the decoration to its constituent parts so as to rehearse the arabesque’s structural logic (fig. 53).⁸⁵ As Perrin Stein has noted, it was this dispersal in print that made Watteau’s La Muette decoration so influential to the history of chinoiserie.⁸⁶ Tillerot, moreover, has proposed that through its foreign subject matter, La Muette and related sites in which painters used arabesque decoration provided incubators for breaking down the formal structures of conventional easel painting in France.⁸⁷ Separate sheets of paper operate like Audran’s tipped-in alternatives, now set free for use and reuse by others. The addition of rudimentary landscape elements and a thin, rectilinear frame establishes an illusionistic space rather than strictly free-floating motifs. Their detailed, ethnographic captions recall those labeling fashion plates or natural history subjects and probably were part of the original decoration as they seem an oddly specific addition for the publishers or Jullienne to have made.⁸⁸ Regardless, both in their original context at La Muette and particularly as prints, these images operate as an interchangeable system of figures: like the *Seasons* or *Continents*, they could be freely combined, used individually or as a series, freestanding or inserted into yet other arabesques.

Boucher’s continued engagement with the arabesque tradition is reinforced by a group of chinoiserie-themed works from around 1742, comprising two pairs of overdoors and related drawings and prints. *The Gallant Chinese Man* (fig. 54) and *Chinese Tea* (ca. 1742; Little Durnford Manor, Wiltshire) were executed in camaïeu, or monochrome blue, a technique linked explicitly to the print market and decoration.⁸⁹ As Tamara Préaud noted of Bachelier’s projects for Sèvres, camaïeu decoration derived from the manufactory’s reliance on prints and announced this medium’s role in the circulation of images between media.⁹⁰ Boucher’s pendants were probably executed for Louise Julie, comtesse de Mailly’s “chambre bleue” at the château de Choisy, a room fitted out with vernis Martin furniture also in camaïeu bleu decoration intended to reference blue-and-white Chinese porcelain.⁹¹ The tall vase and rudimentary architecture directly recall Watteau’s motifs at La Muette, while the elaborate framing provides a trompe l’oeil transition to the actual frame, the kind created by Watteau that Crow



Fig. 54. François Boucher (French, 1703–70). *The Gallant Chinese Man*, 1742, oil on canvas, 104 × 145 cm. Copenhagen, The Davids Collection, inv. B 275. Photo: Pernille Klemp.



Fig. 55. François Boucher (French, 1703–70). *The Flower Seller*, ca. 1742, oil on canvas, 82 × 97.5 cm. Private collection.



Fig. 56. Counsel Room, ca. 1753. Château de Fontainebleau.

describes as “the central motif tend[ing] to expand and draw the surrounding elements into a tighter and more responsive frame.”⁹²

A similar dynamic obtains in the even more inventive frames that lock into position the central, solitary figures of *The Flower Seller* (fig. 55) and *The Bird Seller* (ca. 1742; Rothschild Collection).⁹³ Vegetation and clouds allude to depth, but their foregrounds drop abruptly into white monochrome. The potential for reuse and circulation of motifs for other projects, suggested by Boucher’s extraction of images from the arabesque armature of Watteau’s *La Muette*, is echoed by Boucher’s own reuse of the central figural unit of *The Bird Seller* as a representation of *Air* for a series of *Four Elements* published by Huquier. Rather than assume Boucher’s chinoiserie prints of this period were offshoots of preparatory drawings for Boucher’s multifigure chinoiserie tapestries, Stein has argued that the direction was probably the reverse: figures that originated in drawings for prints eventually became part of the compositions of Boucher’s tapestries. As in Watteau’s early work, the fluidity of movement between vastly

different projects—even executed in entirely distinct media—was anticipated and facilitated by Boucher’s images.

In keeping with broader shifts in taste in France, Boucher eventually abandoned explicitly arabesque decoration; in the early 1750s, however, the paneling and in particular the antiquated, seventeenth-century cloisonné ceiling of Louis XV’s Counsel Room (*salle du Conseil*) at Fontainebleau called for a revival of this approach to decoration (fig. 56). Abel François Poisson, the marquis de Marigny, director of the king’s works (*directeur des Bâtiments du roi*), assigned discrete contributions to this already subdivided surface from Boucher, Carle van Loo, and Jean Baptiste Marie Pierre, all bound together by a combination of heavily carved gilt decoration and painted floral frames by Alexis Peyrotte.⁹⁴ In a manner that echoes the breakdown of labor by genre and artist on Audran’s team of painters, Marigny annotated a proposal for the room with the names of the artists he thought most suitable for particular sections, including an exuberant “À Boucher!” for the ceiling cloisons.⁹⁵ Breaking down the space into a series of discrete units of visual information, even discrete hands, was a mode to which these artists had recourse and which Marigny was confident could be easily adopted given the peculiar requirements of the heavily paneled room. It was a means of seeing, producing, and thinking about images inculcated in their training and reinforced in arabesque decoration itself.

Even once the fashion for the arabesques of Audran and his students had passed and their ephemeral decorations had been literally broken apart, elite artists like Boucher continued to have recourse to the modality that they encouraged. In its simplicity, this system for filling a surface of any format exposed the disjunction between discrete units that might be more seamlessly integrated in conventional easel painting—albeit with an ostensible shift away from their combination in the arabesque as a kind of surface filler, one extendable by the foot and little concerned with semantic content. For painters such as Watteau and Oudry, who had been deeply immersed in the arabesque, or who like Boucher were merely familiar with its structure, the arabesque reinforced what they already knew from their earliest training in drawing: mastery of individuated pieces of visual information facilitated a process of building up and breaking down. This combinatory and thus efficacious means of seeing could meet the demands of a wide range of projects. As will become apparent in the next chapter, this mode of production can be identified in the pragmatic ways leading artists ran their studios, both in works they painted themselves and in the way that they delegated labor to specialist according to genre—a manner resonate with that of Audran’s workshop or other manufactories such as those devoted to tapestry or porcelain. This modality of seeing and making not only provides insight into the mechanics of eighteenth-century painting studios but also works against the singularity of authorship assumed when easel paintings “by” a given artist appeared in the Salon or on the art market.

1. In eighteenth-century France, “arabesque” was preferred but overlapped indiscriminately with “grotesque.” Claude-Henri Watelet and Pierre-Charles Levesque, *Dictionnaire des arts de peinture, sculpture et gravure* (Paris: L. F. Prault, 1792), 2:632; Fiske Kimball, “Sources and Evolution of the Arabesque in Berain,” *Art Bulletin* 23, no. 4 (1941): 307–16; and Bruno Pons, “Arabesques ou nouvelles grotesques,” in *L’art décoratif en Europe*, ed. Alain Gruber (Paris: Citadelles & Mazenod, 1992), 2:157–224. Crucial to my reading are Katie Scott, *The Rococo Interior: Decoration and Social Spaces in Eighteenth-Century Paris* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 123–45, 154–61; and Katie Scott, “Playing Games with Otherness: Watteau’s Chinese Cabinet at the Château de la Muette,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 66 (2003): 203–7. For an innovative reading of the arabesque in relation to the non-Western and as a revision of Western norms of representation, see Isabelle Tillerot, *East Asian Aesthetics and the Space of Painting in Eighteenth-Century Europe* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2024), 109–112.

2. Georges Duplessis, *Les Audran* (Paris: Librairie de l’Art, 1892), 40; Jacques Lacombe, *Dictionnaire portatif des beaux-arts, ou, Abrégé de ce qui concerne l’architecture . . .* (Paris: Jean Th. Hérisant, 1759), 41; and Jules Guiffrey, “Histoire de l’Académie de Saint-Luc,” *Archives de l’art français* 9 (1915): 169. The Fichier Laborde (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Ms. Fr., NAF12040) refers to him as “Peintre, de rue pavé, paroisse de St. Saviour” (1694); “peintre du roi, concierge du Luxembourg” (1724); and “peintre des bâtimens du roy, demeurant au Luxembourg, paroisse St. Sulpice” (1732).

3. *Dessins du Nationalmuseum de Stockholm, collections Tessin & Cronstedt: [Exposition consacrée à] Claude III Audran [et] Dessins d’architecture et d’ornements*, exh. cat. (Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale de France, 1950), 59–67.

4. Carl Hernmarck and Roger Armand Weigert, eds., *Les relations artistiques entre la France et la Suède, 1693–1719: Nicodème Tessin le jeune et Daniel Cronström, correspondance (extraits)*, ed. Carl Hernmarck and Roger Armand Weigert (Stockholm: Egnellska Boktryckeriet, 1964), 22, 18.

5. On the broader phenomenon, see Christian Michel, “Le système d’ameublement des élites françaises au XVIII^e siècle,” in *Corrélations: Les objets du décor au siècle des Lumières*, ed. Anne Perrin Khelissa (Brussels: Éditions de l’Université de Bruxelles, 2015), 35–46.

6. I am very grateful to Martin Olin, who made these available for study. *Dessins du Nationalmuseum*, xviii–xix; and Per Bjurström, *French Drawings: Eighteenth Century* (Stockholm: Nationalmuseum, 1982), xv.

7. Full literature indicating the contradictory positions are found in Pierre Rosenberg and Louis-Antoine Prat, *Antoine Watteau: The Drawings*, exh. cat. (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2011), 3:1348–50 (cat. nos. RP R756–69). Hereafter, all Rosenberg and Prat catalogue raisonné numbers are given as “RP.”

8. *Dessins du Nationalmuseum*, 1 (cat. no. 1). Including acc. nos. CC II:141 and CC II:223.

9. Anne-Claude-Philippe de Tubières de Grimoard de Pestels de Lévis, comte de Caylus, “La vie d’Antoine Watteau,” in *Vies anciennes de Watteau*, ed. Pierre Rosenberg (Paris: Hermann, 1984), 60–61.

10. Daniel Cronström to Nicodemus Tessin, 2 July 1696, transcribed in Hernmarck and Weigert, *Les relations artistiques*, 52–53.

11. Pierre Lespinnasse, “Les voyages d’Hårleman et de Tessin en France (1732–1742) et leurs conséquences au point de vue de l’influence française en Suède,” *Bulletin de l’Histoire de l’Art Français* (1910): 277.

12. Carl Hårleman to Nicodemus Tessin, 15 March 1732, transcribed in Lespinnasse, “Les voyages,” 279.

13. Daniel Cronström to Nicodemus Tessin, 8 May 1693, transcribed in Hernmarck and Weigert, *Les relations artistiques*, 17.

14. On the objects, see Anne Forray-Carlier and Monika Kopplin, eds., *Les secrets de la laque française: Le vernis Martin*, exh. cat. (Paris: Arts Décoratifs, 2014), 88–89 (cat. nos. 40, 43), 188–211 (cat. nos. 142–65); and *Dessins du Nationalmuseum*, 68.

15. Carl Hårleman to Nicodemus Tessin, 15 May 1732, transcribed in Lespinasse, “Les voyages,” 282.

16. Of the artists he mentions, only Guillaume-Thomas-Raphaël Taraval (“who makes equally well figures and animals”) was persuaded. Hårleman to Tessin, 15 May 1732, transcribed in Lespinasse, “Les voyages,” 280–82.

17. Marianne Roland Michel, *Watteau: An Artist of the Eighteenth Century* (Secaucus, NJ: Chartwell Books, 1984), 23–29. On Audran and Gillot, see Axel Moulinier, “Traces de collaboration entre Claude III Audran et Claude Gillot: Les plafonds pour le château de Petit-Bourg et la ‘Chaise du Roy,’” *Cahiers d’histoire de l’art* 19 (2020): 56–67.

18. Jean de Jullienne, *Figures de différents caractères* (Paris: J. Audran et F. Chéreau, 1726), n.p.; Watteau’s role was described as “consisting of small figures that he made in the ceilings of Claude Audran” in Antoine Joseph Dezallier d’Argenville, *Abrégé de la vie des plus fameux peintres, avec leur portraits gravés en taille douce . . .* (Paris: De Bure, 1762), 2:424.

19. Found only in Laurent-Josse Leclerc, “Extrait du *Grand dictionnaire historique* de Moreri: Note de l’Abbé Josse Leclerc,” in Rosenberg, *Vies anciennes*, 9.

20. Jean de Jullienne, “Abrégé de la vie d’Antoine Watteau: Peintre du roy en son Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture,” in Rosenberg, *Vies anciennes*, 13.

21. The “*” footnotes the following definition, which appears in the original: “Paintings executed in one color only are known as camaïeux, and arabesques are paintings or ornaments in which human figures do not appear.” Edme-François Gersaint, “Abrégé de la vie d’Antoine Watteau,” in Rosenberg, *Vies anciennes*, 32–33.

22. Gersaint, “Abrégé de la vie d’Antoine Watteau,” in Rosenberg, *Vies anciennes*, 33.

23. Christian Michel, *Le “célèbre Watteau”* (Geneva: Droz, 2008), 38–39; Margaret Morgan Grasselli and Pierre Rosenberg, eds., *Watteau: 1684–1721*, exh. cat. (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1984), 254–56 (cat. no. 6); and Aaron Wile, *Watteau’s Soldiers: Scenes of Military Life in Eighteenth-Century France*, exh. cat. (New York: Frick Collection, 2016), 13–15.

24. Alan Wintermute, “La Pèlerinage à Watteau: An Introduction to the Drawings of Watteau and His Circle,” in *Watteau and His World: French Drawing from 1700 to 1750*, ed. Alan Wintermute, exh. cat. (New York: American Federation of Arts, 1999), 21.

25. Caylus, “La vie d’Antoine Watteau,” in Rosenberg, *Vies anciennes*, 60–61.

26. Caylus, “La vie d’Antoine Watteau,” in Rosenberg, *Vies anciennes*, 61.

27. Martin Eidelberg, “How Watteau Designed His Arabesques,” *Cleveland Studies in the History of Art* 8 (2003): 69–72. That he executed both is unsurprising given the difference in scale between Audran’s workshop and his own.

28. Grasselli and Rosenberg, *Watteau*, 248; and Sotheby’s, New York, 30 January 2014, lot 11.

29. Christelle Inizan, “Découverte à Paris d’un plafond peint à décor de singeries attribué à Claude III Audran, Antoine Watteau et Nicolas Lancret,” *In Situ* 16 (2011): 2–35.

30. Carl Nordenfalk, “The Stockholm Watteaus and Their Secret,” *Nationalmuseum Bulletin* 3, no. 3 (1979): 105–39; and Catheline Périer-d’Ieteren, “La technique d’exécution de Rubens et de Watteau, filiation et rupture,” in *Watteau: Technique picturale et problèmes de restauration*, exh. cat. (Brussels: Communauté Française de Belgique, 1986), 35–38.

31. Martin Eidelberg, “Watteau and Audran at the Hôtel de Nointel,” *Apollo* 115 (2002): 10–16, 13, 16n21. Reconstruction is impossible to any useful degree but attempted in Jean Cailleux, “Decorations by Antoine Watteau for the Hôtel de Nointel,” *Burlington Magazine* 103, no. 696 (1961): i–v. Additional panels are known by nineteenth-century descriptions,

first documented in Edmond de Goncourt, *Catalogue raisonné de l'oeuvre peint, dessiné et gravé d'Antoine Watteau* (Paris: Rapilly, 1875), 208.

32. RP 233–34; and Cailleux, “Decorations by Antoine Watteau,” iv–v.

33. Germain Brice, *Description de la ville de Paris et tout ce qu'elle contient de plus remarquable* (Paris: Fournier, 1752), 3:404–5.

34. Sotheby's, New York, 18 November 2010, lot 235; Jean Vittet, *Les Gobelins au siècle des Lumières: Un âge d'or de la manufacture royale*, exh. cat. (Paris: Swan, 2014), 36–41; and Jules Guiffrey, *Comptes des Bâtiments du roi sous le règne de Louis XIV* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1901), 5:379. On this practice, see Michael Sonenscher, *Work and Wages: Natural Law, Politics and the Eighteenth-Century French Trades* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 215.

35. RP 23. See Eidelberg, “How Watteau Designed,” 74–76.

36. RP 196.

37. RP 196; and Martin Eidelberg, “Gabriel Huquier—Friend or Foe of Watteau?” *Print Collector's Newsletter* 15, no. 5 (1984): 164n22.

38. RP 113; and Eidelberg, “How Watteau Designed,” 72.

39. Ettore Camesca, ed., *L'opera completa di Watteau* (Milan: Rizzoli, 1968), 109–10 (cat. nos. 142–43); *Mercure de France*, December 1732, 286; and *Dessins du Nationalmuseum*, 46 (cat. no. 189).

40. RP 294. Compare to RP 290–301 in particular. On the genre and its importance to Watteau and a tradition of single-figure prints, see Marika Takanishi Knowles, “Pierrot's Periodicity: Watteau, Nadar and the Circulation of the Rococo,” in *Rococo Echo: Art, History and Historiography from Cochin to Coppola*, ed. Katie Scott and Melissa Hyde (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 109–27; and Marika Takanishi Knowles, *Realism and Role-Play: The Human Figure in French Art from Callot to the Le Nain Brothers* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2020).

41. Martin Eidelberg, ed., *Watteau et la fête galante*, exh. cat. (Valenciennes: Musée des Beaux-Arts, 2004), 254–57 (cat. no. 79). Comparable to *Les Amants endormis* (*The Sleeping Lovers*) in Louis de Fourcauld, “Antoine Watteau: Peintre d'arabesques,” *Revue de l'art ancien et moderne*, no. 24 (1909): 139; and Nordenfalk, “The Stockholm Watteaus and Their Secret,” 105–40. Beyond X-radiographs, their appearance can be imagined through Lancret's *Bergère endormie et jeune seigneur* (1725–35; *Sleeping Shepherdess and Young Gentleman*; Musée Jacquemart-André), in which arabesque portions were not painted out even in a rectangular frame.

42. RP 169. The most extensive study is Margaret Morgan Grasselli, “Eighteen Drawings by Antoine Watteau: A Chronological Study,” *Master Drawings* 31, no. 2 (1999): 110–11.

43. Thomas E. Crow, *Painters and Public Life in Eighteenth-Century Paris* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 58–62.

44. Tillerot, *East Asian Aesthetics*.

45. Hårleman to Tessin, 15 May 1732, transcribed in Lespinasse, “Les voyages,” 282. Chronologically and in terms of subject, only one commission for the baths at Sceaux easily aligns Oudry and Audran. Louis Gougenot, “Vie de Monsieur Oudry” [10 January 1761], in *Mémoires inédits sur la vie et les ouvrages de membres de l'Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture*, ed. Louis Étienne Dussieux et al. (Paris: J. B. Dumoulin, 1854), 2:400; and *Dessins du Nationalmuseum*, 2–3 (cat. no. 5), 60.

46. Hal N. Opperman, *Jean-Baptiste Oudry* (New York: Garland, 1977), 1:70–72, 418–19.

47. Gougenot, “Vie de Monsieur Oudry,” 2:370.

48. *Procès verbaux* 4 (30 July 1717): 250.

49. Charles-Nicholas Cochin, “Éloge historique de M. Massé,” in *Oeuvres diverses de M. Cochin ou Recueil de quelques pièces concernant les arts* (Paris: Jombert, 1771), 3:286. Suggested by Jean Marc Nattier's later involvement.

50. Cochin, "Éloge historique de M. Massé," 3:283–323; and Émile Campardon, *Un artiste oublié: J. B. Massé, peintre de Louis XV, dessinateur, graveur* (Paris: Charavay Frères, 1880).
51. Gougenot, "Vie de Monsieur Oudry," 2:370.
52. *Dessins du Nationalmuseum*, 68.
53. Gougenot, "Vie de Monsieur Oudry," 2:400–401; Opperman, *Jean-Baptiste Oudry*, 2:400 (P107); and Jean Locquin, *Catalogue raisonné de l'oeuvre de Jean-Baptiste Oudry, peintre du roi (1686–1755)* (Paris: Jean Schemit, 1912), 104 (cat. no. 547).
54. Gougenot, "Vie de Monsieur Oudry," 2:401. On such problems for French ceilings, see Alexandre Cojannot, "Structure, volume et décor: Le rôle des architectes dans l'évolution des plafonds et des couvrements en France au XVII^e siècle," in *Peupler les cieux: Les plafonds parisiens au XVII^e siècle*, ed. Bénédicte Gady, exh. cat. (Paris: Musée du Louvre, 2014), 32–34.
55. Campardon, *Un artiste oublié*, 115–39. Massé's after-death inventory has not been located.
56. Bérighen also employed Oudry as an arabesque painter for a series of large arabesque canvases and related decoration in his home in the rue Saint-Nicaise (After-death inventory, 28 February 1770, Paris, Archives Nationales, MC/ET/LXXVI/299, under no. 756). Though disassembled from the fittings of their original interior, these remained highly valued and reached 600 livres 1 sol. *Catalogue raisonné... Après le décès de M. Bérighen, premier écuyer de roi* (Paris: Musier, 1770), 10–11 (lots 24–27).
57. A fuller description—along with another *calèche* commissioned by Bérighen—is given in *Mercure de France*, August 1724, 1843. Working from a mistaken reference by Locquin, Opperman included these works in his catalogue raisonné but was unable to locate the *Mercure* citations and lengthy descriptions. Opperman, *Jean-Baptiste Oudry*, 2:400 (P106). On these, see Max Terrier, "Travaux de Jean-Baptiste Oudry pour la petite écurie du roi," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 6, no. 1366 (1982): 188–90.
58. *Mercure de France*, September 1724, 2018–19.
59. *Mercure de France*, September 1724, 2019–20.
60. On *papillotage*, see Marian Hobson, *The Object of Art: The Theory of Illusion in Eighteenth-Century France* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 47–61.
61. *Mercure de France*, January 1722, 85–86; and Marianne Roland Michel and Daniel Rabreau, eds., *Les arts du théâtre de Watteau à Fragonard*, exh. cat. (Bordeaux: Galerie des Beaux-Arts, 1980), 41.
62. La Font de Saint-Yenne, *L'ombre du grand Colbert, le Louvre, et la ville de Paris...* (Paris: n.p., 1752), 204–5.
63. See Nicolas-Charles de Silvestre etching of Oudry's *Stag Hunt* (1723; Nationalmuseum, Stockholm) dedicated to Fagon with Oudry's address in the rue Jean Pain-Mollet, where he moved at the end of 1723 or beginning of 1724 but left by December 1725. For the print, see Opperman, *Jean-Baptiste Oudry*, 1:300 (cat. no. 116); and for the painting, see Opperman, *Jean-Baptiste Oudry*, 1:418–19 (P177). In conversation, Marianne Grivel suggested that such obsequiousness should be read as bids for future patronage rather than existing indebtedness.
64. Pierre Bonnassieux, *Conseil de commerce et Bureau de commerce 1700–1791: Inventaire analytique des procès-verbaux* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1900), xlvii.
65. Gougenot, "Vie de Monsieur Oudry," 2:372.
66. Edmond Jean François Barbier, *Journal historique et anecdotique du règne de Louis XV*, ed. Paul Arthur Nouail de la Villegille (Paris: J. Renouard et Cie., 1847–56), 2:394; and René Louis d'Argenson, *Journal et mémoires du marquis d'Argenson*, ed. E. J. B. Rathéry (Paris: Jannet, 1859), 2:205. Hulst is known to have been in contact with Oudry by the early 1720s when, according to Gougenot, he allegedly paid 15 pistoles more than the young artist had asked for a large buffet shown at the Exposition de la Jeunesse in 1723. Gougenot, "Vie de Monsieur Oudry," 2:367; and Opperman, *Jean-Baptiste Oudry*, 1:567 (P546).

67. In which capacity he read several *conférences* to the Académie, including one on the utility of provincial drawing schools. He also produced a “Notes pour servir à l’histoire de l’Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture” (Paris, École des Beaux-Arts, Ms. 28; a copy is in Paris, Institut National d’Histoire de l’Art [INHA], Ms. 1019. Also see “Histoire des conférences lues à l’Académie par M. Hulst” (INHA, Ms. 219).

68. Georges Lechavallier-Chevignard, *La manufacture de porcelaine de Sèvres* (Paris: Renouard, 1908), 28; and Tamara Préaud, “Recherches sur les sources iconographiques utilisées par les décorateurs de porcelaine de Vincennes (1740–1756),” *Bulletin de la Société de l’histoire de l’art français* (1989): 110.

69. Susan M. Wager, “Boucher’s Bijoux: Luxury Reproduction in the Age of Enlightenment” (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2015), 188n466.

70. Gougenot, “Vie de Monsieur Oudry,” 2:400. Gougenot’s description and location are both followed closely in Fagon’s after-death inventory (13 May 1744, Paris, Archives Nationales, MC/ET/LXXVI/387). The house had been purchased by his father, Louis Fagon, doctor to Louis XIV, and was designed by François Mansart.

71. Opperman, *Jean-Baptiste Oudry*, 1:167.

72. Though the Versailles animals were likely by Desportes, see Georges de Lastic and Pierre Jacky, *Desportes* (Saint-Rémy-en-l’Eau: Éditions Monelle Hayot, 2010), 1:30, 47–50, 99–115, 140.

73. Pierre-Jean Mariette, *Abecedario de P. J. Mariette et autres notes inédites de cet amateur sur les arts et les artistes . . .*, ed. Philippe De Chennevières and Anatole de Montaiglon (Paris: J. B. Dumoulin, 1858), 4:66.

74. Marie-Catherine Sahut, “Grâce à une nouvelle disposition légale et à la générosité d’un mécène: Un exceptionnel décor de Jean-Baptiste Oudry entre au Louvre,” *Revue du Louvre* 1 (2003): 16; and Christie’s, London, 27 January 2000.

75. Sahut, “Grâce à une nouvelle disposition,” 16.

76. Opperman, *Jean-Baptiste Oudry*, 1:518 (P421). The later works vary slightly but should be connected to this initial figure.

77. Colin B. Bailey, “‘A Long Working Life, Considerable Research and Much Thought’: An Introduction to the Art and Career of Jean-Baptiste Oudry (1686–1755),” in *Oudry’s Painted Menagerie: Portraits of Exotic Animals in Eighteenth-Century Europe*, ed. Mary Morton, exh. cat. (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2007), 18. For more variants, see Hal Opperman, *J.-B. Oudry, 1686–1755*, exh. cat. (Fort Worth: Kimbell Art Museum, 1983), 198–200 (cat. nos. 105–6).

78. Opperman, *Jean-Baptiste Oudry*, 1:223, 2:928 (P105A); and Opperman, *J.-B. Oudry*, 60–62 (cat. no. 15). Opperman seems to reproduce an autograph copy of the prime version. The only signed and dated version sold at Artcurial, Paris, 31 March 2016, lot 117.

79. He later captured the stag alone in a drawing (ca. 1739; Staatliches Museum Schwerin). Vincent Droguet, Xavier Salmon, and Danièle Véron-Denise, *Animaux d’Oudry: Collection des ducs de Mecklembourg-Schwerin*, exh. cat. (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 2003), 120 (cat. no. 39).

80. Opperman, *J.-B. Oudry*, 96–99 (cat. no. 40).

81. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Département des Estampes, ED-98-FOL (Caylus), I, inv. 363.

82. Christie’s, London, 27 January 2000, lots 38, 39.

83. Dezallier d’Argenville, *Abrégé de la vie des plus fameux peintres*, 2:424.

84. See Martin Eidelberg and Seth A. Gopin, “Watteau’s Chinoiseries at La Muette,” *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 130 (1997): 19–46; and Martin Eidelberg, “Figures chinoises et tartares,” in *A Watteau Abecedario*, <http://watteau-abecedario.org/> (forthcoming).

85. This reading is heavily indebted to Scott, “Playing Games.” The belief that the room was constructed — and deconstructed — in this way is elaborated on in Perrin Stein, “François

Boucher, le gravure, et l'entreprise de chinoiseries," in *Une des provinces du rococo: La Chine rêvée de François Boucher*, ed. Yohan Rimaud et al., exh. cat. (Paris: Musée des Beaux-Arts et d'Archéologie, 2019), 224. On extant sections, see Eidelberg and Gopin, "Watteau's Chinoiseries," 19–46; Scott, "Playing Games," 197–98, especially n34; and Sotheby's, New York, 22 April 2015, lot 74.

86. Stein, "François Boucher," 224.

87. Tillerot, *East Asian Aesthetics*, 149–57.

88. Scott, "Playing Games," 199; and Stein, "François Boucher," 225.

89. Stein, "François Boucher," 206–7.

90. Préaud, "Recherches sur les sources," 106, 108.

91. Scott, *The Rococo Interior*, 28–29; and Rimaud et al., *Une des provinces du rococo*, 154–58 (cat. nos. 84–85). On formal links between the materiality of porcelain and Western representation in this period, see Tillerot, *East Asian Aesthetics*, especially 157–63.

92. Crow, *Painters and Public Life*, 61.

93. Alexandre Ananoff, *L'oeuvre dessiné de François Boucher (1703–1770): Catalogue raisonné* (Paris: F. de Nobele, 1966), 1:381 (cat. no. 266); and Sotheby's, London, 8 March 2016, lot 114. A comparable landscape associated with Claudine-Alexandrine Guérin de Tencin exists (private collection, previously Stair Sainty, London).

94. Boris Lossky, "Le plafond de François Boucher au Cabinet du conseil du château de Fontainebleau," *Revue du Louvre* 17 (1967): 257–64; and Xavier Salmon, "Alexis Peyrotte (1699–1769) ou les grâces du rocaille à Fontainebleau," *Les dossiers de la Société des amis et mécènes du château de Fontainebleau* 7 (2012): 1–32.

95. Paris, Archives Nationales, O1/1437–378.